(b) The average prevailing price on the *104th* day of the tobacco auction in Andhra Pradesh during 2000 i.e. on 25.7.2000 is Rs. 34.33 per kilogram as agaisnt Rs. 38.69 per kilogram on the corresponding day last year.

(c) STC has entered the market to procure only straight grades at prices not below 1999 average prices. Tobacco Board has entered the market to procure only low grades at Minimum Support Price.

(d) STC has procured 5.62 M.Kgs. of straight grades of FCV tobacco at an average price of Rs. 37.74 per kilogram and Tobacco Board has purchased 0.024 M.Kgs. of low grade tobacco at an average price of Rs. 12.18 per kilogram as on 25.7.2000.]

Use of CNG as Environment-Friendly Fuel

*109. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CNG is an environment-freindly fuel and existing petrol vehicles can use it after using a conversion kit costing Rs. 35,000 approximately;

(b) if so, the steps taken to promote the use of the said kit;

(c) whether Government propose to introduce subsidy to meet the capital expenditure involved;

(d) whether any study has been conducted to know the benefits of this kit to the economy of the country; and

(e) if so, the findings thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) It is true that the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) is environment—friendly fuel. The cost of conversion kit depends upon the model of the car as well as the type of engine. A concessional rate of custom duty is already being granted on import of CNG kits. There is no proposal, at present, with this Ministry to indroduce any subsidy to meet capital expenditure involved in the conversion kits.

(d) and (e) As the conversion kits have come into use only recently, it is too early to quantify their benefits to the economy of the country.